

Remarks:

Claims 21-24, 27-29 and 32-34 remain for consideration in this application.

✓ Claims 1-20, 25, 26, 30 and 31 have been cancelled.

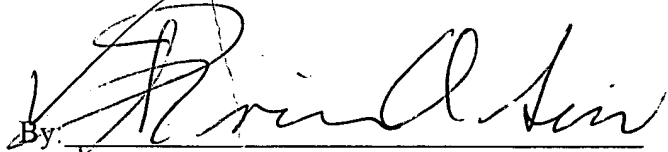
It is noted the above-identified office communication mailed on 12/31/02 incorrectly has Status line 2a checked, thus indicating that the office communication is a final action.

Telephone interviews with Examiner Backer and his Supervisor James Trammell have confirmed that his office communication is in fact a non-final action, and this fact has been confirmed by querying the Office's PAIR database to determine that the status of the application is stated to be Non-Final Action Mailed.

Thus the present response, wherein the claims of Group-I are selected for consideration by the Examiner, is fully responsive to the office communication mailed on 12/31/02.

Respectfully submitted,

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